Guidelines to support the Completion of the Business Alive Investigative Study

Leaving Certificate Business

November 2024

Contents

Introduction

This document, *Guidelines to support the completion of the Investigative Study* provides:

- details of the nature and scope of the Business Alive Investigative Study as outlined in the curriculum specification for Leaving Certificate Business
- guidance for schools, teachers and students on undertaking, completing and submitting the Business Alive Investigative Study
- information on the role of schools and teachers in supporting students with the Additional Assessment Component (AAC)
- descriptors of quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the curriculum specification for Leaving Certificate Business[1] and the Brief that will be published annually by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in term 2 of year 1.

Assessment for Certification in Leaving Certificate Business

Assessment for certification is based on the rationale, aim and learning outcomes of the Leaving Certificate Business specification. There are two assessment components: a written examination and an additional assessment component comprising an investigative study. The written examination will be at higher and ordinary level. The Business Alive Investigative Study will be based on a common brief and will be assessed at the level at which the student sits the final written examination. Each component will be set and examined by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

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[1] https://www.curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-subjects/business/

Table 1: Overview of assessment for certification in Leaving Certificate Business

Assessment component	Weighting	Level
Business Alive Investigative Study	40%	Common brief
Written examination	60%	Higher and ordinary level examination papers

Overview of the Business Alive Investigative Study

The Additional Assessment Component (AAC) in Leaving Certificate Business provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning across the course, and to apply the learning set out in the unifying strand in the context of one or more of the contextual strands and/or cross-cutting themes. It involves students completing an Investigative Study and it is envisaged that the AAC will take up to 20 hours to complete. The Business Alive Investigative Study will require students to demonstrate their capacity to plan, conduct, analyse and evaluate research on a particular issue, using a variety of sources and considering a range of perspectives, while drawing on their ongoing engagement with the world of business. Students are expected to present informed perspective(s), conclusion(s) and/or recommendation(s) at the end of their study. The Descriptors of Quality on page 10-13 are intended to provide insights into the broad expectations for students completing the AAC.

The Investigative Study will focus on student learning across the Leaving Certificate Business specification. The nature of the brief will exploit the potential of the Investigative Study to be motivating and relevant for students and to allow students to potentially explore an aspect of business relevant to their own interests or context through providing an opportunity to create and develop a research question to support further and deeper investigation.

A common brief will be published annually by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in term two of year one. The brief will set out the specific requirements of the Business Alive Investigative Study and will outline a theme that is specific to that year's cohort.
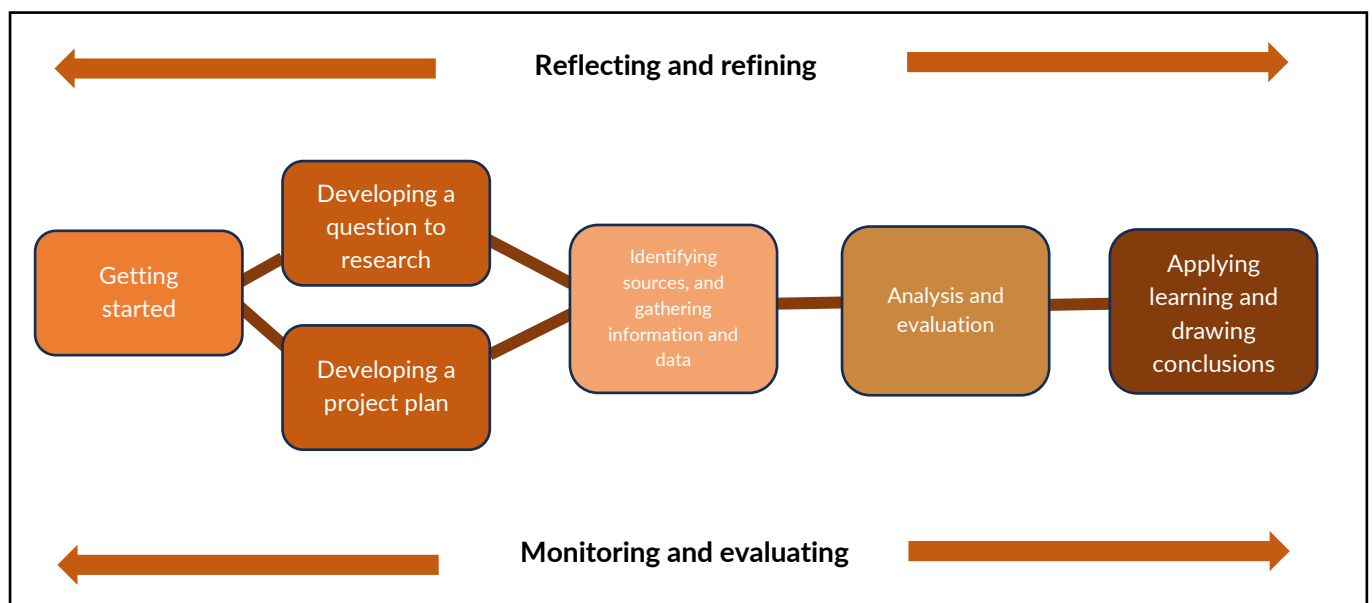The brief will include:

- the theme of investigation
- instructions to students and schools regarding submission protocols (including word count, file size, file type, etc.)
- instructions to students and schools regarding authenticity of work and the authentication process.
- a general description of the investigative process
- a broad outline of mark allocations for the report.

Students will develop a research question in response to the brief, will plan the Investigative Study and demonstrate project management skills, and their capacity to monitor and evaluate progress. As part of the study students will conduct research, analyse and interpret the results, present conclusions based on evidence, and apply these conclusions.

The Investigative Study is designed to give students practical opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills, values and dispositions, to consider the cross-cutting themes and apply their project management skills. Students will have an opportunity to apply the key competencies they have developed through their engagement with Leaving Certificate Business such as being creative, thinking critically and solving problems, managing learning and self, and communicating as they engage in this component. Engagement with this component may also highlight aspects of the dynamic world of business of interest to students, support students in seeing the relevance of business to their lives and to society, and potentially highlight potential future career paths.

The graphic below indicates the broad areas of activity within the Business Alive Investigative Study and each of these is expanded on further in the next section.

Reflecting and refining

Getting started

Developing a question to research

Developing a project plan

Identifying sources, and gathering information and data

Analysis and evaluation

Applying learning and drawing conclusions

Monitoring and evaluating

Figure 1: Overview of the main stages of activity in the Business Alive Investigative Study

As part of their study students will produce an individual report which will be submitted digitally during year 2 to the SEC in a format specified by the SEC. Schools have a high degree of autonomy in planning and organising the completion of the investigative study. This document, *Guidelines to support the Completion of the Business Alive Investigative Study*, gives guidance on a range of matters related to the organisation, implementation, and oversight of the investigative study.

Process for the completion of the Business Alive Investigative Study

The Business Alive Investigative Study includes a number of stages which are described in greater detail below. An indicative timeline for the completion of each stage is included in the relevant section for each stage. The length of time needed to complete each stage will depend on the nature of the brief in any given year.

Ongoing monitoring of the process and reflection is a key aspect across the stages of the Investigative Study. As part of their project plan students will engage in ongoing monitoring of the progress of their Investigative Study and will note any issues that arise and how they overcame these issues. This ongoing monitoring will also help to inform the student's overall reflections on the process. The Appendices included in these guidelines may also be used to support ongoing reflection and monitoring of the process. Maintaining an investigative folder may also support the student in this process.

To support integration into regular classroom practice, students may begin their work on the Investigative Study during class time and continue working on it outside of the classroom setting as is normal practice.

Stage 1: Getting Started

The brief for the Business Alive Investigative Study will be issued by the SEC in term two of year one. Having received the brief, students will complete initial background research to inform their understanding and thinking around the theme. It is envisaged that this stage may take 2-3 hours.

Teachers may facilitate a class-based discussion on the theme of the brief to support students in considering their initial background research around the theme identified in the brief. Students may find it useful to consider the following prompts[2] when getting started and completing their initial background research:

- What do I already know about the theme within the brief?
- What else do I need to know/ would I like to know about this theme?
- Does this theme link to what I may have learned to date in my Leaving Certificate Business class, to business in the world around me or to other aspects of learning inside or outside school? How?

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[2] This list presents a set of sample prompts which may be used and is not exhaustive.

- How might I learn more about this theme? What resources or sources might be useful for me?
- Where will I store my background research? How might I do this?

Students are encouraged to maintain an investigative folder, which they can use to keep a record of their work on their study and gather resources, research and information that may be useful in managing and completing their study and compiling their report.

For the teacher, an initial exploration of the brief can help inform planning for the coming year by identifying learning outcomes that relate to the brief. In addition, this may provide opportunities to highlight relevant areas of learning in Leaving Certificate Business or relevant news items in the media throughout the year. The learning within the Unifying Strand in the Business Specification will support students in their research. This supports the integration of the Business Alive Investigative Study as part of regular teaching and learning in the classroom. Teacher interaction with students at this stage provides an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the students' initial ideas and to identify any gaps in understanding.

Students may use their Investigative folder to gather resources that they may use in the completion of their study and should use a range of resources to inform their thinking around the theme and support the development of their research question.

Stage 2: Developing a question to research

Having completed their initial background research students will develop a research question. This question will be related to a particular aspect of the theme that is of interest to students or an area that they would like to explore further. It is envisaged that this stage will take between 1-2 hours.
Students will use their initial background research to identify a theme/topic that is of interest to them and will then consider main issues or problems or gaps in their knowledge.
Students should use SMART objectives (iteratively where necessary) to help to inform their research question. Appendix One provides student prompt questions to assist in refining the research question to research. Students should discuss their proposed question to research with their teacher and the teacher may encourage students to use the student prompt questions to help the student to refine their question.
It is important to note that the question chosen by the student may be further refined as they progress through the process, and the student should note if this is necessary and why it is necessary as it may be useful for them when monitoring their progress and reflecting on the process.

Stage 3: Developing a project plan

Students should develop a project plan for their study. This plan will help students to set manageable goals while conducting their investigative study. Students should engage with their plan for the study, reflect on, and evaluate the extent to which the planning undertaken supports the effective completion of their study. The plan should be revisited regularly as the study progresses.

The plan should include the student's objectives for the study which should be linked to the research question developed based on the brief from the SEC, and should also include the student

- identifying the main tasks to be undertaken during the study
- identifying the resources they will need
- developing a time schedule for the work
- considering potential risks that may impact on the successful completion of the study.

Ongoing monitoring and reflection should be a key aspect of the plan which will help the student to identify any issues. Students should also reflect on the process of conducting the investigative study and how their planning supports them in carrying out the study. Some prompt questions and a draft layout to support developing a project plan are included in Appendix Two of this document. This plan is developed by the student to support their work on the study and will support the student in monitoring the progress of the study. Students will not be required to submit their project plan as part of their report but will be expected to refer to it as appropriate throughout the report through reflecting on, and evaluating the extent to which the planning undertaken supported the effective completion of their study. Sharing the plan with the teacher is an important step in the ongoing authentication process. It is envisaged that developing their project plan may take students between 1-2 hours.

Stage 4: Identifying sources and gathering information and data

Students will conduct research to further explore the question they have identified for research. They will gather evidence in the form of information/data from a variety of primary and/or secondary sources which may include the internet, print and online media, or any other appropriate source e.g. findings from reports, commentary from people involved in the world of business, surveys and interviews. Appendix Three in this document provides prompt questions which students may find useful in organising their research and managing the information and data gathered.

It is important for students to choose sources most relevant to their question, to consider a variety of perspectives and to record the sources of all the information gathered to ensure the sources of information used can be appropriately referenced in their report. Further guidance on referencing is provided in Appendix Four. In completing their Investigative Study students are expected to conduct their research in a responsible, safe and ethical manner, and to take the necessary steps to avoid plagiarism.

Maintaining a good record of research findings will support students as they begin to develop their response to their research question and compile their report. The teacher can ask for work to be shared by students at regular intervals as part of the ongoing process of authentication of student work. It is envisaged that this stage (Stage 4), combined with Stage 5 may take students between 6-8 hours to complete.

Stage 5: Analysis and evaluation

In stage 5 students will analyse and evaluate the data and information that they have gathered. Good research practice involves reviewing, summarising, analysing and evaluating the data and information gathered to date during their study.

Students may analyse the information and data they have gathered to identify key findings through:

- breaking down the information and/ or data into smaller parts
- identifying patterns/ trends/ contradictions in the information and/or data
- highlighting the most important aspects of the information/data relative to the research question

In evaluating their findings students may find it useful to consider the following prompts[3]:

- how is the information or data relevant to my research question?
- is this a reliable source of information? How do I know? How recent is this information or data? Is it up to date?
- is the information biased or unbiased? Why do I think this? How do I know? What is the purpose of the information or data? Is it based on fact or opinion?
- are there any alternative explanations or perspectives?
- what is the information I have gathered telling me? How do I know?
- are there limitations to the findings? What are they?

Students should clearly present their findings using relevant graphics as appropriate. The findings students present should be justified by the analysis and evaluation conducted and should link clearly to the research question developed by the student. Sharing this work with the teacher is an important step in the ongoing authentication process. Students should clearly acknowledge sources of information used in their report following the guidelines set out in Appendix Four, and also identify any limitations in their study.

It is envisaged that this stage (Stage 5), combined with Stage 4 may take students between 6-8 hours to complete.

Stage 6: Applying learning and drawing conclusions

Once students have analysed and evaluated the information and data gathered during the Investigative Study they will be required to apply this learning as part of their conclusion. The application of learning will depend on the requirements of the brief issued annually but in general students will reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business and business-related

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[3] This list presents a set of sample prompts which may be used and is not exhaustive.

stories in the media and/or the cross-cutting themes of the specification and/or their own perspectives on the theme or topic. Students may find it useful to consider the following[4]:

- how do my findings respond to my research question and the objectives I set at the outset of my study?
- how do these findings relate to my learning across the Business specification and my learning in the Business classroom?
- how can I apply these findings to the world of business (locally, nationally and/or internationally)? How do they link to the world of business or business-related stories or information in the media?
- how do these findings link to the cross-cutting theme(s) in the specification?
- how have the findings of my Investigative Study influenced my perspective(s)?

Student monitoring of the progress of the investigative process and reflection are key elements of conducting the Business Alive Investigative Study. Students will engage in reflection both during and after the process of conducting the study. This includes identifying the successes and challenges encountered in completing the study according to their project plan and what if any changes they had to make to the plan when carrying out the study. During this final stage students may use and draw upon their investigative folder to support their work across the stages of the study. This stage of the process may take students between 1-2 hours to complete.

Compilation of the final report

Students will compile their final report prior to submitting to their teacher for review and authentication before submission to the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The language used throughout the report should be coherent and consistent. Students may choose to compile their report as they progress through the stages of the Investigative Study or complete their report at the end of the process. This is the final step in a multi-step process that helps the teacher have full confidence that they are signing-off on an authentic piece of student work. Their report should respond to the requirements of the brief. Students should set out the research, analysis and evaluation undertaken, their engagement with planning and reflection throughout the study, and demonstrate application of their learning.

Teachers **should not** engage in corrections of the report for redrafting by the student. Since the Business Alive Investigative Study report is the **only** document which students will submit to the

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[4] This list presents a set of sample prompts which may be used and is not exhaustive.

SEC for marking it is important that in writing their report, students give an authentic account of all aspects of the investigative process they engaged with.

Depending on how the student has chosen to compile the report throughout the process, it is envisaged that this stage may take 2-3 hours.

Format and Submission of the Business Alive Investigative Report

Students will be required to develop and submit a final report as part of their Business Alive Investigative Study. The final report will be presented in a digital format prescribed by the State Examinations Commission.

All work completed as part of the Business Alive Investigative Study must be concluded by a set date. This date will be set by the SEC and communicated to schools and will also be included in the brief that issues in Term 2 of Year 1 of the course.

The final report must be submitted in line with instructions provided by the SEC. These instructions will contain specific information, such as the word count, number of images permissible, the required structure and section headings, file size, etc.

Students may choose to support, clarify or provide evidence of either the process or outcomes of their Business Alive Investigative Study through the use of images such as illustrations, sketches, graphs, charts, tables, photographs, etc.

Students are required to engage in referencing to acknowledge the use of any work included in their project that is not their own. Details on referencing and using references can be found in Appendix Four.

It is extremely important that all of the work submitted by students for assessment is their own. The submission of work by any student not entirely completed by that student is a significant breach of regulations. Submitting such work may lead to the imposition of penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

A robust authentication process is central to ensuring the integrity of any assessment process. School-based authentication by teachers of students' work on their AAC is essential to the fair and equitable assessment of that work. While it is neither practicable nor necessary for teachers to witness all aspects of students' work, teachers need to be satisfied that students have carried out the work themselves. Regular, comprehensive engagement with each student's work on their AAC will enable teachers to confidently and legitimately authenticate any work being submitted for assessment.

The SEC provides detailed guidance on the authentication of coursework and the conditions for its acceptance. Information as to how this applies in the case of the Business Alive Investigative Study will be provided in the brief, and also in other documentation which may be issued by the SEC.

Descriptors of Quality

The descriptors below relate to the learning achieved by students in the Business Alive Investigative Study. In particular, the investigation requires students to:

- plan their investigative study, apply, and demonstrate project management skills, and their capacity to monitor and evaluate progress
- investigate an aspect of business and apply the skills developed primarily through their engagement with the Unifying Strand to reach informed conclusion(s), recommendation(s) and/or perspective(s)
- apply the relevant cross-cutting theme(s) within the Leaving Certificate Business Specification to their Investigative Study, and relate the study to the world of business
- communicate their findings.

The descriptors of quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study are set out in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Descriptors of quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Planning	-demonstrate effective engagement with planning throughout their study and clearly reflect on and evaluate the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the effective completion of the study.	- demonstrate engagement with planning throughout their study and reflect on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study.	-demonstrate limited engagement with planning throughout their study and present limited reflections on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study.
	-develop a clear and probing research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/or internationally.	- develop a clear research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/or internationally.	- develop some form of research question.
Investigating	-identify and evaluate the potential value of a wide range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief.	-identify and evaluate the potential value of a range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief.	-identify a limited range of sources related to the research question created based on the brief.
	- complete an in-depth analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources.	-analyse and evaluate data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources.	-present limited analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of sources.

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Investigating (continued)	-present conclusions justified by the analysis and evaluation of the data and information, related to the research question developed. - clearly identify limitations in the investigative study across the design of the research question, the research gathered and/or analysis conducted.	-present conclusions related to the research question developed. - identify some limitations in the study.	- present limited conclusions demonstrating engagement with the topic. -do not identify limitations in the study.
Applying	-demonstrate capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business and business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. -clearly and appropriately relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification.	-demonstrate some capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. -relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification.	-demonstrate limited capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. -make limited links between the findings of the investigation and the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification.

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Communicating	-present clear and appropriate data and information and analysis using a range of relevant graphics as appropriate. -use coherent and consistent language throughout the report with clearly acknowledged appropriate supporting references and reflections on the study.	-present adequate data and information and analysis; using relevant graphics as appropriate. -use moderately coherent and consistent language throughout the report with some acknowledged supporting references and reflections on the research.	-present limited data and information and analysis, limited or no use of graphics. -present a report where the language used demonstrates limited coherence and consistency with limited supporting references and reflections.

Role of the teacher

The teacher has an important role to play in supporting and supervising student work on the Business Alive Investigative Study. Teaching and learning related to the additional assessment component should be integrated into ongoing classroom practice to maximise opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes of the specification and support the development of key competencies.

The release of the common brief by the SEC in term two of year one allows teachers to signpost the requirements and content of the brief from an early stage of learning in the subject. It will also facilitate teachers in planning for the integration of the AAC, as appropriate, into the natural flow of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Support may include:

- clarifying the requirements of the Business Alive Investigative Study brief

- helping students to understand how the brief issued by the State Examinations Commission for the Business Alive Investigative Study links to the Leaving Certificate Business specification

- identifying any particular areas of the specification that students may need to engage with in order to undertake the AAC

- ensuring students are aware of the descriptors of quality associated with the AAC

- offering prompt questions, such as those supplied on pages 16-19 to stimulate and support students' planning and critical thinking throughout the process

- encouraging students to focus on the requirements of the brief and to relate their work to the learning outcomes in the specification

- guiding students in the continued development of their research skills

- helping students to appreciate the importance of good referencing practices and the necessity to avoid any form of plagiarism

- facilitating access to appropriate resources

- providing appropriate access arrangements for students with additional learning needs, in accordance with the State Examinations Commission provision of reasonable accommodations

- making students aware that they must comply with any relevant mandatory regulations or requirements such as those relating to health and safety, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), accessing public or private property etc.

- using feedback appropriately to promote a reflective approach to work on the AAC

- providing instructions at strategic intervals to facilitate the timely completion of the AAC

- drawing students' attention to any requirements in relation to the submission of the AAC specified in the brief
- promoting opportunities afforded by the AAC to develop Senior Cycle key competencies.

In order to facilitate the authentication process, teachers should engage regularly with students' work on the AAC. Teachers should be aware that only work which is the student's own can be submitted for assessment to the State Examinations Commission and that each student must submit their work on an individual basis. Where more than one student within a class is working on a similar AAC, it is important that each student takes an individualised approach to the work. The feedback provided to students should be general and nondirective in nature. Teachers should not provide any excessive or inappropriate support to students, such as editing draft work or providing model text or answers to be used in the students' evidence of learning.

Appendix One: Developing a question to research

The following prompt questions may assist students in refining their question to research. These may be used by the student in developing their question, in discussing their proposed question with their teacher and/or peers, and to reflect on and refine their question as they progress their study and develop their project plan.

SMART	Questions for students to reflect on when developing their research question
Specific	Is my question linked to the theme in the brief? Why and how is it linked? (Your background research might be useful here) Is my question clear and focused? Does the question state exactly what I want to answer? Is there anything I could change to make it clearer?
Measurable	Can I find enough information to respond to my question from a range of different sources? Should I use primary and/or secondary sources? Will I be able to access the information I need? If not, should I rethink my question?
Achievable	Where will I find the information I need? What sources might I use and how will I access these sources? Are there sufficient sources of information or data available?
Relevant	Is my question helping me to develop my understanding of the theme within the brief? Is it linked to what I am learning in my Business class or to business in the world around me?
Timebound	Having considered the prompts set out in this table can I use my research question to make a project plan for my investigation? Will I be able to carry out the plan in the time allocated? If not, do I need to reconsider or narrow my question?

Appendix Two: Developing a project plan

These prompts may support students in developing the project plan for their Business Alive Investigative Study. The project plan should be developed after students have considered their question for research and should form the basis for ongoing monitoring of their progress with their Business Alive Investigative Study. Students may find it useful to use the layout below to develop their project plan and to support ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

| Objectives | My role | Resources | Time schedule | Possible risks |

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation
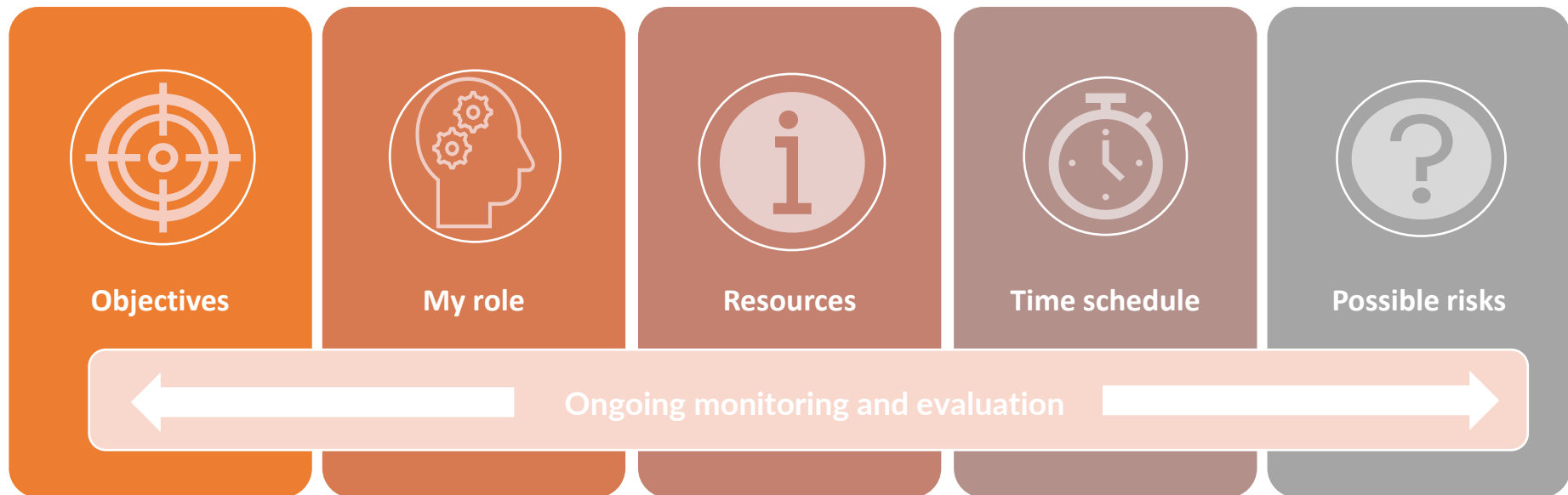
	Questions to consider	My reflections/thoughts/considerations
Objectives	• What is the purpose of my research? What am I aiming to find out? • How is this linked to my research question? How is this relevant for business either locally, nationally or internationally? Why is it of interest to me? • What are my goals for each stage of my work?	
My role	• What have I learned previously that might help me? • What will I need to do? What skills will I need in doing this study? • What competencies might I develop in doing this study? • How will I organise my work and keep records? How will I monitor and evaluate my progress?	
Resources	• What resources will I need to access to answer my research question? • When will I need access? How will I access these resources? • Are these resources suitable for the question I have developed? Will they give me a range of perspectives?	
Time schedule	• What is the time frame for my study? What are the main stages involved in the study? What will I need to do and when? • Have I prepared a plan to make best use of my time? • Have I allowed enough time to complete each stage of the work? How and when will I track my progress?	
Possible risks	• Have I considered what might go wrong or challenges I might encounter? • How might these risks impact on the progress or completion of my study? How might I overcome these? • How will I identify what is working well?	
Ongoing monitoring and evaluation	• What is working well? How do I know? • What could be better? How do I know/ What might I do to improve? • How am I progressing in line with my goals and timelines? • Do I need to reconsider my question? Do I need to access additional sources of information? • What are the limitations of my investigative study?	

Appendix Three: Managing research and information

These prompts may help to support students in managing their research and the data and information that they find through conducting their research. It is intended to help students to manage their sources of information, to extract key points of information and to consider how this is relevant to their question while also reflecting on the findings. This process may also be helpful for students when analysing, evaluating and presenting conclusions.

Source of information:		
Date accessed:		
Key information	**How and why this is relevant to my question for research?**	**My reflections/thoughts on this**

Source of information:		
Date accessed:		
Key information	**How and why this is relevant to my question for research?**	**My reflections/thoughts on this**

Source of information:		
Date accessed:		
Key information	**How and why this is relevant to my question for research?**	**My reflections/thoughts on this**

Appendix Four: Guidelines to support referencing

Referencing is an important aspect of the AAC as it allows those reading the Business Alive Investigative Study Report to better engage with the content and to verify the information provided in the reference. It is the most appropriate way for students to acknowledge the source of any information, ideas, material or images not their own which they have included in their AAC.

Referencing allows students to provide evidence of the research they have engaged in, it helps to support and give weight to arguments and conclusions, and it can be used to demonstrate that different perspectives have been considered and explored by the student.

Students should engage in referencing both within the body of their work (in-text citation) and also in the reference section of the Business Alive Investigative Study Report. The use of in-text citation provides a direct link between what students write and the research on which their work is based.

Example:
A student using material from page 57 of the book *Inclusion: effective practice for all students?* would use the in-text citation (p. 57, McLeskey, 2013) and then go on to also add details to the list of references as McLeskey, J. (2013) *Inclusion: effective practice for all students?* 2nd edn.

In the reference section of their document, students should provide the appropriate details of any sources they have used during the course of their *Business Alive Investigative Study* such as:

- books, newspapers, magazines

- professional journals and government reports

- online sources including videos, podcasts etc.

- material from specialist organisations and relevant individuals

- material generated by artificial intelligence (AI) software and AI applications. Specific information will be issued around this in the AAC brief and in related documentation from the SEC.

The reference section is not included in the word count. Comprehensive referencing helps to show that students have engaged in honest and ethical research practices and have avoided plagiarism. Referencing should be as specific as necessary to communicate the particular research source, such as a page number or chapter in a book, a section in a website, timestamp on a podcast or video etc.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and occurs when work other than the student's own is used without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work. This includes the use of material generated using artificial intelligence (AI) software or AI applications. Direct copying of material from any source without proper acknowledgement is not permitted and may incur penalties, up to and including the withholding of related results.

When referencing the sources students used in their Business Alive Investigative Study Report they should ensure that, regardless of the type of source, there is enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference. No particular, formal style of referencing is required.

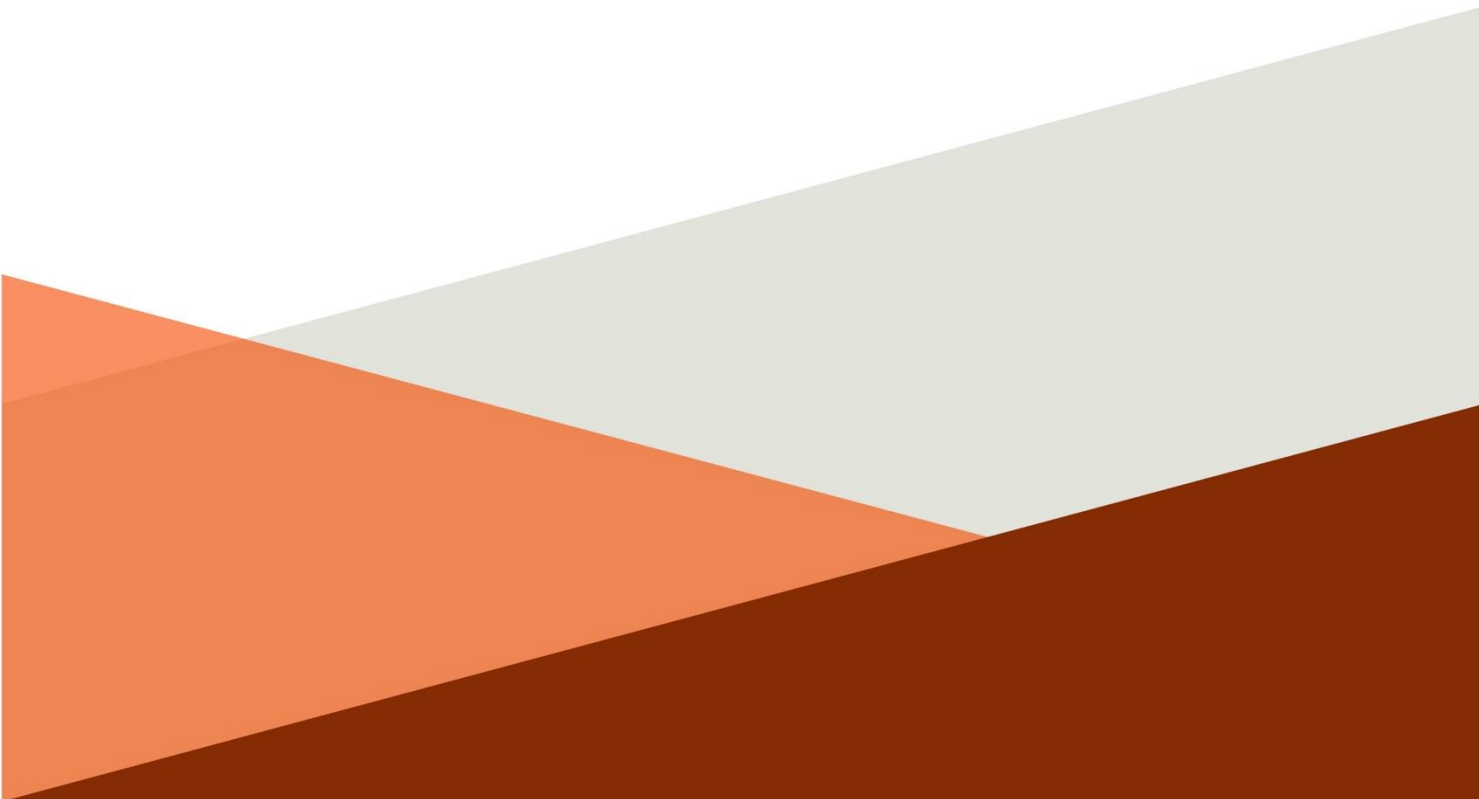**How students should reference different sources**

- Where students are citing written sources or information in print, they should give the author's name, the title of the publication, year of publication, and, if necessary, the page number or chapter/section of the publication.

- Where students wish to refer to an internet site or online source, there should be enough accurate detail to enable the reader to authenticate the reference, including the hyperlink and date read or downloaded.

Where students have used material generated by artificial intelligence (AI) software and AI applications this must be acknowledged. The reference should include the name of the AI tool used, the date the content was generated and provide a brief explanation of how it was used. Many Generative AI tools generate shareable URLs that set out the content of chat sessions that took place. Where such a tool has been used, the URL should be included in the list of research sources. Where an AI tool does not generate a sharable URL, students should include the name of the tool and the prompt used.

Examples of in-text Citations for different types of sources
Book: (p. 57, McLeskey, 2013)
Newspaper/magazine article: (Hearne, J., 30/08/2024)
Text/image accessed online: (thelatinlibrary.com/101/RhetoricalDevices)
Audio accessed online: (Ep. 10, rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22093250)
Video accessed online: (3:20 to 5:45, youtu.be/yCv4iyPqZKQ)
AI Tools (with shareable url): (chat.openai.com/share/f45a1e23-2217-4443-a244-d56ab26ae940)
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Examples of references for different types of sources
Book in list of references: McLeskey, J. (2013) *Inclusion: effective practice for all students?* 2nd edn.
Newspaper/magazine article Hearne, J. (30/08/2024) 'How bad driving habits cost Irish motorists hundreds every year', Irish Examiner
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